April 25, 2020

To the Graduate Program:

This project, entitled "A Guide for Classroom Teacher: Understanding ESL Students" and written by Ashley Fields, is presented to the Graduate Program of Greensboro College. I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts with a Major in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

_____
Paula Wilder, Advisor

We have reviewed this Project and
recommend its acceptance

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Chair, Department of English

Accepted for the Graduate Program

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A GUIDE FOR CLASSROOM TEACHERS: UNDERSTANDING ESL STUDENTS

Presented to
The Graduated Program
of
Greensboro College

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in
Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

by
Ashley Fields

May 2020

Advisor: Paula Wilder

Abstract

Unfortunately, content teachers do not always have the opportunity to be trained on teaching English Learners. These teachers are often at a disadvantage because they do not know how the ESL department operates within their district. They also are not familiar with strategies that help differentiate their lessons so that ESL students can better understand the objectives. In order to address the problem, this thesis will operate as a guide for classroom teachers who have ESL students. Teachers can use this as a reference to matters that typically concern ESL education. These matters will range from cultural backgrounds to educational strategies to be used in the classroom. Additionally, the included manual will include several examples of mentioned strategies.

Dedication

I would like to thank my family for the support they have given me as I completed this project. It is through their examples of perseverance and determination that I have drawn my own strength.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Ms. Paula Wilder for her genuine interest in my project and her perpetual guidance throughout the completion of this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr. Michelle Plaisance for her continued support and advice.

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Chapter One: Introduction

During my eight years as an ESL teacher for the North Carolina Public School System I have learned that classroom teachers have a common fear: the ESL student. At the onset of every school year teachers request urgent meetings with me for advice on what to do with the ESL students they find on their rosters. Likewise, when students, who are from another country, enroll into school, panic ensues. In most cases, teachers expect a magical transition and are easily discouraged when language acquisition seems slow. Not only that, but classroom teachers and other school staff are unaware of the process of identifying new students as ESL.

In response to these concerns, I would like to create a user-friendly manual for elementary teachers that describe the common issues surrounding ELs in my district. This document will be a reassuring reference point for both veteran and new teachers. It is important to provide classroom teachers with a starting guide so that they do not feel overwhelmed. Classroom teachers need to pace themselves and understand that their ESL students "are not only learning English as a subject but are learning through it as well" (Gibbons, 2003). The majority of classroom teachers are experts in their specific fields, but do not have a background knowledge in teaching language. The main goal of this manual is to help content teachers explore the methods used when teaching the language of the content.

This manual consists of four different parts. The first part details how students, who are new to our district, are classified as ESL students. It also includes a breakdown of initial scores and language ability. The second portion of the manual concern classroom modifications and testing accommodations that are available to ESL students. The third part can be used as a

checklist of instructional guide. It contains a checklist that enumerates key language skills that newcomers will need to learn. This portion will be particularly helpful for teachers who have difficulty teaching language instead of strictly content. The final part of the manual details different differentiation strategies that can be used during instruction. Teachers will be able to utilize their own lesson plans while embracing the unique needs of the ESL students in their classroom.

The production of this manual reduces the stress and anxiety that classroom teachers have when teaching ELs. In return, the stress and anxiety of the student will be lowered. This process is known as lowering the affective filter. Motivation, anxiety, and confidence are important qualities for language learners. When these traits are nurtured, language acquisition happens in a more natural way. Learning a language is difficult, therefore, "a learner has to have extraordinary motivation in order to succeed at learning English" (Anjomshoa and Sadighi, 2020, p 126.). Unfortunately, ELs are often disregarded during classroom instruction. It is not uncommon that students be in a separate area of the rom. This practice provides no motivation for the student to learn.

It comes as no surprise that language learners battle with anxiety. Furthermore, anxiety is reciprocated between the teacher and their students. In my experience, classroom teachers have not had the opportunity to attend trainings on ESL instruction. Although anxiety cannot be eliminated when learning a new language, it can and should be reduced. In language acquisition there is both facilitating and debilitating anxiety. Alpert and Haber claimed that "these two constructs of debilitating and facilitating anxiety may be uncorrelated. Thus, an individual may possess a large amount of both anxieties, or of one but not the other, or of none of either" (1960, p. 213). Regardless of the type, anxiety is undoubtedly present in language acquisition. This

manual equips teachers with knowledge and practices that will combat anxiety and garner success. Not only should teachers know how to combat the anxiety within their students, but also why their students have anxiety. ELs come with their own unique set of circumstances that differ greatly from that of their native speaking counterparts. “Dynamic studies emphasize the complex interactions of multiple factors that influence the anxiety reaction, including the ongoing interactions among learner variable such as anxiety, perceived competence, willingness to communicate and the features of the learning/communication situation” (MacIntyre, 2017). While no two circumstances or students will be identical, teachers benefit when they have a better understanding of the students’ diverse backgrounds.

Self-confidence is a major factor when learning a new language. A classroom full of native speaking peers is exceptionally intimidating. Language learners will typically go through a silent phase. During this phase they are less likely to provide output. However, they are absorbing vocabulary and language patterns as they are immersed in their new language and culture. In order to begin speaking, students need to gain confidence and continue to grow that confidence as they learn more English. According to MacIntyre and Doucette (2010), “being willing to communicate is part of being fluent in a second language, which is often the ultimate goal of L2 learners” (p. 161). Utilization of this manual, provides teachers with the skills to allow their students to gain confidence at a natural pace.

This manual provides clear examples and resources for teachers to use so that students feel valued and have a purpose. As a result, they will feel motivated, less anxious, and confident in the classroom. Teachers who utilize this manual will empower their ELs with the skills they need to hone their acquisition. Overall classroom “anxiety is lowered because the students are

more relaxed while being engaged" (Nath, Mohamad, and Yamat, 2017). Teachers will produce active and successful students who can communicate effectively in their communities.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Throughout this chapter, I review important factor that interfere with lowering the affective filter for ELLs in the content classrooms. I begin the chapter by defining the affective filter. I then provide examples of obstacles that classroom teachers face with ELLs as well as a synopsis of the research that is associated with overcoming those obstacles. I conclude with an explanation as to why this research is particularly important among my colleagues.

Affective Filter

In order to combat the issues surrounding the affective filter, one must first understand what the affective filter is. Only then, can the concerns be addressed and begin to be lowered. Learning a second language is stressful, especially for students in English speaking classrooms. While exploring Krashen's theory, Schutz declared that although there are several methods for instructing ELLs, "the best methods are…those that supply comprehensible input in low anxiety situations" (Schutz, 2020, p. 1). This "psychological filter…either aids or deters the process of language learning" (Hostetler, 2020). Lowering the affective filter lowers the amount of anxiety felt by both the students and the teachers. There are several ways in which content teachers can lowr the affective filter when instructing ELs. Harnessing motivation, correcting errors, and testing practices are all factors that create or destroy boundaries (Hostetler, 2020).

Motivation

All language learners are motivated by unique factors. Motivation can be defined as the reason "why people decide to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity and how hard they are going to pursue it" (Dörnyei, 2001, p. 8). Learning a new language takes time and patience. Motivation must remain steady. Students "who have positive relationships with their teachers feel motivated to learn" and are "more engaged when they have a supportive relationship with the teacher" (Yumus, Osmana, & Ishaka, 2011, p. 2638, p. 2640). The age of the learner can help determine what they are motivated by. According to Karpova (1999), Katchen (1993), and Martinez (2002), supplying students with materials that are authentic to their learning needs will increase their learning as well as create a more enjoyable experience in the classroom. As Du (2009) stated, teachers who can design their curriculum around the motivations and goals of their students will produce students who are more apt to learn because the material is relevant to their overall lives. Ultimately, language learners are "motivated to learn how to speak, how to listen, how to read, and how to research information through the Internet" (Shu-Chin, 2008, p. 179). It is the teacher's responsibility to harness these motivations and find activities and strategies that promote these ideals.

Young learners.

Young learners are motivated by attention, engagement, volunteering, and classroom verbal interaction (Huang, 2011). Most students feel pressure from their parents to do well in school. In order for them to perform well academically and socially they first have to learn English. James P. Raffini (1993) addressed the idea of high stakes testing and grading processes that are common in schools. Language learners are, not only learning a language, but they are functioning in their new language. According to Raffini (1993), teachers who create "conditions

that attract, invite, and stimulate interest, and that help students meet their psychological and academic needs within the classroom" will produce students who remain eager to learn (p. 3). Teachers need to understand that in order to harvest these conditions, they need to have respect for the language process. They should have patience as students gain the confidence to verbally communicate with their peers. It is a common problem when teaching ESL students, that they tend to become overwhelmed and lose interest. It is a commonly held belief that materials containing "difficult language, unneeded vocabulary, grammar, and too many structures" give ELs a "hard time", and ultimately cause them to become "less motivated" (Shu-Chin, 2008, p. 177). According to Register (2001), songs and chants are popular in classrooms of young children. He also claimed that music and lyrics are beneficial to young ESL students because music is comprehensible, enjoyable, and meaningful. Creating a classroom where young learners are engaged and entertained will foster confidence. This confidence will lower the affective filter and provide the motivation they need to continue learning.

Another filter that should be addressed with young learners is test anxiety. Wright (2002) explored how test anxiety is common in all students. There are unique factors that increase test anxiety in language learners. Similar to motivation, students want to perform well on tests and fear being negatively evaluated. Wright (2002) indicated that the reasons for test anxiety differ between young and adult learners because "the language barriers these students face inevitably affect the ways in which they perform on tests" (p. 3). He also explained that language learners are aware of the pressures that the teachers feel, considering they are "usually expected to meet the same standards as native English speakers on high-stakes tests" (p. 3). These tests are intimidating to students as they largely contain academic language that is formal in nature. Although modifications can be made, none familiarize the language. Teachers of ELs should

provide ample opportunities to practice test taking strategies. However, "it is not sufficient to know about strategies; a reader must also be able to apply them strategically" (Anderson, 1991, p. 469). Anderson (1991) indicated that based on the learners' English proficiency some strategies are better than others. Although students might understand the concept of the strategy, they might not be able to apply it to the text because their vocabulary and "language foundation" may not be strong enough to utilize the strategy (Anderson, 1991, p. 469). Students who are encouraged to embrace testing and are shown various applicable strategies can feel less anxiety and more motivation.

Adult learners.

Adult learners have different motivation from school-age learners. Previous research from Fitzgerald (1995) has "revealed that ESL students are highly motivated to participate in adult education and that demands for ESL instruction tend to exceed the capacity of the adult education service system" (Shu-Chin, 2008, p. 172). Unlike children, who are surrounded by, and in some ways, forced to learn English, adult learners have a choice and are driven by different motivational forces. Whereas young learners enjoy songs and have the opportunity for all day immersion in public schools, most adults must actively make a choice to be a part of their English-speaking community. Materials that are preferred by adult language learners are "talks/discussions, newspapers, maps, stories (printed), food, money, bank checks, application forms, Internet, want ads, magazines, advertisements, and quizzes" (Shu-Chin, 2008, p. 179). Clearly, these types of materials are directly related to adult life when functioning in society. Blake (1997) claimed they all pertain to being responsible and ultimately providing for families. Teachers of adult ESL students should determine the main reason for their students taking the

class. Teachers should build and modify their instruction around these reasons so that the students can be successful in their personal, professional, and social lives. Blake (1997) positioned that building English literacy skills and developing comprehension of simple English texts are crucial for adults who are looking for a job or working towards a promotion. When teaching adults, teachers have a huge resource on the internet. Teachers can encourage communication through the internet because online communication is less intimidating that face-to-face communication. The internet also provides the opportunity for learner to utilize all domains of the English language (Blake, 1997). Unlike young learners, adult learners are less motivated by fun, and more motivated by real world experience. Rather than learning English to pass tests or get good grades, they are hoping to be successful in English speaking communities. When teachers create activities that promote success, students' filters are lowered because they are motivated as the class is relevant to why they are there (Igoudin, 2008).

One of the main motivators of an adult English learners is family. In order to provide for their family and operate in an English-speaking community, adults will need to learn at least basic English. This can be challenging for teachers because "the adult learner population has a wide range of educational backgrounds. Some have no education, whereas others arrive in the United States with doctoral degrees" (Bailey, 2006, p. 117). Teachers need to make sure they appropriately differentiate their instructions to accommodate all students. Although, they are all learning a new language, learners who are proficient in their native language, learners who are proficient in their native language, have a better understanding of grammar concepts and rules. According to Bailey, ELs can apply their native language knowledge to their acquisition of English. Language courses for adults should be geared towards the language found in interviews. This will give the learners ample practice when applying for jobs in the community. After

practicing and feeling confident, they will be more likely to apply to jobs posted in their communities. It should be the goal of the teacher to provide the students with useful vocabulary and sentence structures that will be most useful to their individual needs in the community, in their professions, and in their personal lives (Bailey, 2006).

Another factor that influences the familial motivation is children. Often times adult language learners have children who are in school and labeled as ESL. According to Guo (2006), ESL parents face many barriers with regards to parent involvement. First and foremost, they are intimidated by the teachers. ESL parents want to be involved, but are worried about the judgement they might face if they cannot speak English and easily communicate with teachers. Guo (2006) claimed this is a disservice to their children. He reasoned that parents are constantly unaware of schoolwide policies, updates, and general information concerning their child. Not only are they intimidated by the teachers, but also, with the entire faculty and community of the school. There are several staff members other than teachers who may reach out to parents. These include principals, social workers, and office staff. Parents are reluctant to answer these phone calls because they fear misunderstanding the nature of the call, essentially creating more confusion. One way to combat these ignored communication attempts, adult ESL teachers should provide their students with language skills directly related to communication. Guo (2006) suggested that parents learn practical translation platforms and technologies that can lower the communication barriers between schools and parents. (Guo, 2006).

Error Correction

Teachers who teach ELs struggle with finding the balance of appropriate correction versus over correction. There are many ways to provide correction. The domain that is being

corrected also influences the type and amount of correction that is necessary. Scholars have argued when to provide correction, how to provide correction, and how often to provide correction. Students who are over corrected will lose confidence and will be less inclined to participate actively in classroom and individual activities for fear of being wrong. Teachers, and students alike, should embrace errors. Teachers should "be flexible enough to incorporate the preferences and needs of the language learner" (Oladejo, 1993, p. 71). This flexibility will contribute to the confidence of ELs while lowering the affective filter and promoting language acquisition.

Feedback of written work.

According to Oladejo (1993), the majority of learners have similar preferences in what they consider the most important aspects of language. The most important being organization, followed by grammar, vocabulary, and finally pronunciation. The top three preferences of learners are directly related to writing. Based on this research, ELs put high emphasis on being able to represent themselves and their ideas clearly and proficiently through writing. With this knowledge, teachers should teach writing specific skills. Written responses of teachers continue "to play a central role in most L2 and foreign language (FL) writing class". However, "recent empirical research suggest that feedback does lead to writing improvements" (Hyland & Hyland, 2006, p. 84). Students should be provided with graphic organizers that help organize their thoughts and ideas into a typical English text. When correcting grammar, teachers should focus on grammar skills and vocabulary previously taught and or the specific grammar objectives currently being taught. "As a way addressing the problems, scholars have carried out varieties of research ranging from affective strategies for teaching essay to addressing other teacher and

student-related factors" (Fakeye & Ohia, 2016, p. 81). Although teachers are responsible for providing the majority of corrections, students should practice self-correcting as well as peer editing. Teacher feedback "is not reciprocal…and it does not take into account learner needs and responses to feedback" (Nassaji, 2011, p. 317). Self-correction gives students the opportunity to evaluate their grammar and develop their personal writing styles. Peer editing is beneficial to both the writer and the editor. The writer can understand the viewpoints of their peers while they learn how to tweak their writing so that their peers can better understand. The editor has the opportunity to see that others have made mistakes in their writing. The editor also has the opportunity to practice and apply the skills they have learned in class. Peer editing is beneficial to the class as a whole because everyone will support the success of one another. (Guenette, 2007).

Feedback on speech.

While Oladejo (1993) ranked pronunciation as fourth, speaking continues to be a difficult aspect of language learning. A study by Donald (2010) showed that students were fearful of vocalizing opinions or answers in class. The ELs in the study wanted to be absolutely certain they were correct before they offered their input. Furthermore, it was likely that once students were certain and willing to provide an answer, one of their native speaking classmates had already answered the question. Teachers should ensure they are providing a sufficient wait time so that students can formulate their words and feel confident enough to speak in class. Donald (2010) explained that wait time is helpful but not always the only intervention needed. He also suggested that while students appreciate the extra time they have, they easily become insecure since everyone is waiting for them to respond. In order to combat this, he recommended that the

teacher provide an example of the targeted statement or a sentence from, depending on the student's proficiency (Donald, 2010).

During speech, teachers should refrain from interrupting a student in order to make corrections. It is ideal that students be able to express their ideas completely. Only then should specific target language be corrected so that "correction should be focused on reducing defensiveness on the part of the learner" (Horwitz, 1986, p. 125). Salikin (2011) agreed with this position and claimed that "teachers should be very careful when dealing with those errors due to the fact that speaking in a foreign language is particularly anxiety provoking" (Salikin, 2011, p. 116). Salikin (2011) explained that this anxiety is because ELs feel that they are being asked to perform higher than their level of acquisition. Teachers who have unreasonably high expectations and over correct their students' speech "might destroy the learners' efforts to try the target language" (Salikin, 2011, p. 116).

It is a popularly held belief that before speaking in from of an entire class, language learners will gain more confidence when they are given the chance to practice with a peer. Unlike written work, speech does not give the opportunity for reflection or editing. It must flow naturally and "in real time" (Fauzan, 2016, p. 50). Fauzan (2016 explained a study where language learners must produce speech in the form of a debate. When learners were provided with topics that "stimulated the students' creativity to explore the language," they were more apt to produce natural language (Fauzan, 2016), p. 55). Another variable that increased speaking scores was "simpler notions" (Fauzan, 2016, p. 54). Teachers provided instructions that were simple and direct. Two of the variables that had the highest impact was providing "more time [to] do rehearsal in pairs" as well as letting the students "write the outline of their arguments" (Fauzan, 2016, p. 54). Increasing the practice time allowed students to practice a variety of

scenarios before the actual debate so that they will be ready to participate in real conversation. When students create an outline, it gives them the opportunity to create a visual that they can use to organize their thoughts and imagine possible situations that could arise during the debate.

Conclusion

In order to have success with language learners, teachers must first "lesson distress in the learner" (Donald, 2010, p. 52). Each language learner comes with a particular set of motivations. Teachers who take the time to understand these factors will increase the willingness of their students to participate "since motivation and identity are socially constructed" (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009, p. 5). Only then, will students gain the confidence they need to succeed when learning a language. Language learners need confidence to become fluent. It is crucial that they feel comfortable and secure in the environment created by their teachers. This security is imperative because "being able to speak is one of the indicators of mastering the language" (Fauzan, 2014, p. 50). Lowering affective filters allows teachers to focus "on the connection between students' interest, self-esteem, attitude, motivation, and the use of various student-centered communicative activities designed to enhance confidence and language acquisition" (Lin, 2008, p. 113). While learning a language takes time, the first step is to lower the anxiety felt by teachers and students in the classroom. Teachers who are better prepared with trainings or access to reference materials are more likely to have success with language learners.

Chapter Three: Rationale

During my eight years as an ESL teacher for the North Carolina Public School System, I have learned that classroom teachers have a common fear: the ESL student. At the onset of every school year, teachers request urgent meetings with me on what to do with the ESL students they find on their rosters. Likewise, when students who are from another country enroll in school, panic ensues. In most cases, teachers expect a magical transition and are easily discouraged when language acquisition seems slow. Not only that, but classroom teachers and other school staff are unaware of the process of identifying new students as ESL.

In response to these concerns, I have created a user-friendly manual for elementary teachers that describes the common issues surrounding ESL students in the classroom as well as the rest of the school environment. This document is meant to be a reassuring reference point for both veteran and new teachers. It is important to provide classroom teachers with a starting guide so that they do not feel overwhelmed. Classroom teachers need to pace themselves and understand that their ESL students are not only learning English as a subject but are learning through it as well" (Gibbons, 2003, p. 247). Helping teachers reduce incidental language and focus on targeted language skills, will allow students to be less confused and more understanding of the lesson objectives.

Typically, teachers contact me about new ESL students before they even officially enroll. It will be eye opening for teachers if they are given the opportunity to understand the process that these students undergo in order to be identified as English learners. This promotes a positive and healthy school climate. School climate includes the "process of teaching and learning" which is

"fundamentally relational" (Thepa & Guffey, 2013, p. 363). It is not beneficial for an ESL student to be in a classroom where the teacher is visibly frustrated with their language ability. Students will feel that negativity, and it will interfere with their academic performance and academic confidence. Not only are the relationships between teachers and students important, but the relationship between teachers themselves is equally important. When teachers are in agreement, it creates an atmosphere of structure and stability. Giving teachers a glimpse into the ESL side of new student enrollment will help them know what to expect as well as pass those expectations onto their students. Ad description of this process composes the first section of the manual.

The second section of the manual is a detailed account of classroom modifications and testing accommodations that ESL teachers are able to provide. It has been my experience that most teachers acknowledge the modifications, but are unsure of how to incorporate them into their lessons. When modifications are used properly ESL students are "fully included into the mainstream classroom where the student is provided the appropriate accommodations and modifications" (MacAskill, 2020, p. 2). Classroom modifications lists the different modifications offered within the district. There are also detailed definitions and examples that teachers can use. Since modifications are used for daily instruction, teachers typically forget to incorporate testing accommodations. It is our policy that if a student receives an accommodation for a state assessment, then the student must practice that accommodation throughout the year on classroom tests. Not only will this section assist the teachers when planning their lesson, but it will also ensure that the teachers are compliant with federal guidelines.

The third section of the manual is an initial instruction guide. This will be most valuable to teachers who acquire ESL students who are newly enrolled in U.S. schools. However, teachers

can also use this section as an informal assessment to gauge the language ability of ESL students. The guide includes a checklist that enumerates key language skills that newcomers need to learn. It also begins with a brief overview of minimizing incidental language so that student can focus on the objective and not be distracted by unnecessary wording. There is also an emphasis on the overall learning goal of ESL: student output. This section will help content teachers rethink their content emphasized lesson into a language emphasized lesson.

The fourth part of the manual is about differentiation strategies that can be used in the classroom for ESL students. Differentiation provides students with "multiple options for taking in information (differing learning styles and interests), making sense of ideas (varying cognitive processing needs, ranging from pacing to levels of abstraction), and expressing what they learn (multiple choices for assessment tasks)" (Dahlman, Hoffman, & Brauhn, 2008, p. 2). Classroom teachers will be able to have a better understanding of what different strategies are as well as how to use them.

Although ESL teachers can be found and used for guidance when it comes to ESL students, it will be highly advantageous for teachers to have their own resource. Once teachers familiarize themselves with the manual, it can be used as an invaluable tool for lesson planning and lesson delivery. The ultimate goal is to reduce the stress that teachers feel when ESL students are on their roster.

Chapter Four: Project

UNDERSTANDING ESL STUDENTS

A Guide for Classroom Teachers

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Process of Becoming an ESL Student

WIDA

North Carolina is considered a WIDA state. WIDA is comprised of 40 states, territories and federal agencies. Their mission is to advance "academic language development and academic achievement for children and youth who are culturally and linguistically diverse through high quality standards, assessments, research and professional learning for educators".

WIDA provides the guidelines with which we test and evaluate our students' language proficiency. All students newly enrolled into a WIDA state must be screened within 30 days. If a student transferred from a WIDA state their previous scores are accepted and they do not need to be rescreened. Parents must be notified at least 24 hours in advance of any test.

https://wida.wisc.edu/

Testing

W-APT

The screener test, or W-APT provides the administrator with a score that will level each domain for the student (Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking). Once the test is complete, school staff and parents are notified of the student's placement or non-qualification to the program.

ACCESS

Every spring, ESL students participate in ACCESS testing. The testing window typically begins at the end of January and finishes by the middle of March. Like the W-APT, this test is broken into four different sections: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. Each test takes roughly one hour to administer. Students typically take two separate days to complete testing because they cannot take all four tests in one day, except in rare circumstances. Students are allowed specific testing accommodations on the ACCESS test, but they must be assigned by the EC department. Once testing is completed and scores are returned, students and parents are notified with scores. The scores determine if students will continue in the ESL program or if they have met the criteria to exit the program.

Listening

During regular administration, the listening test is delivered electronically to grades 1-12. Students listen to a narrator and answer corresponding multiple-choice questions.

Reading

During regular administration to grades 1-12, the reading test contains no audio (aside from brief instructions). Students are responsible for reading passages and answering multiple choice questions about the text.

Once the listening and reading portions are
completed, students are placed in tiers to determine
what speaking and writing test they will take.

Writing

During regular administration of the writing test, students in grades 1-3 provide hand written responses in booklets after listening to the test administrator read from a script. Students in grades 4-12 type their responses on an electronic device after listening to a narrator.

Speaking

During the regular administration of the speaking test, grades 1-12 listen to an electronic narrator. The narrator prompts the student. The student must then respond by speaking into a microphone.

Kindergarten ACCESS

During regular administration of the Kindergarten ACCESS test, the test administrator gives each test one on one. This test contains the four domains: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. It can be administered in a single day.

LIEP

Language Instruction Education Program

Our school district has developed an LIEP (See Appendix A). Once a student has qualified for ESL services, the ESL teacher refers to this LIEP to determine the plan of action to best serve the student. Each section of the LIEP contains important information.

Context

This section provides an overall snapshot of the district. In this example, the average elementary ESL teacher has between 45 to 60 students on their caseload. Middle and High School ESL teachers average between 45 to 51 and 51 to 62 respectively. These numbers are subject to fluctuation from year to year. It is also noted that ESL teachers may serve more than one school. ESL teachers are responsible for communicating their schedule to school staff.

Criteria

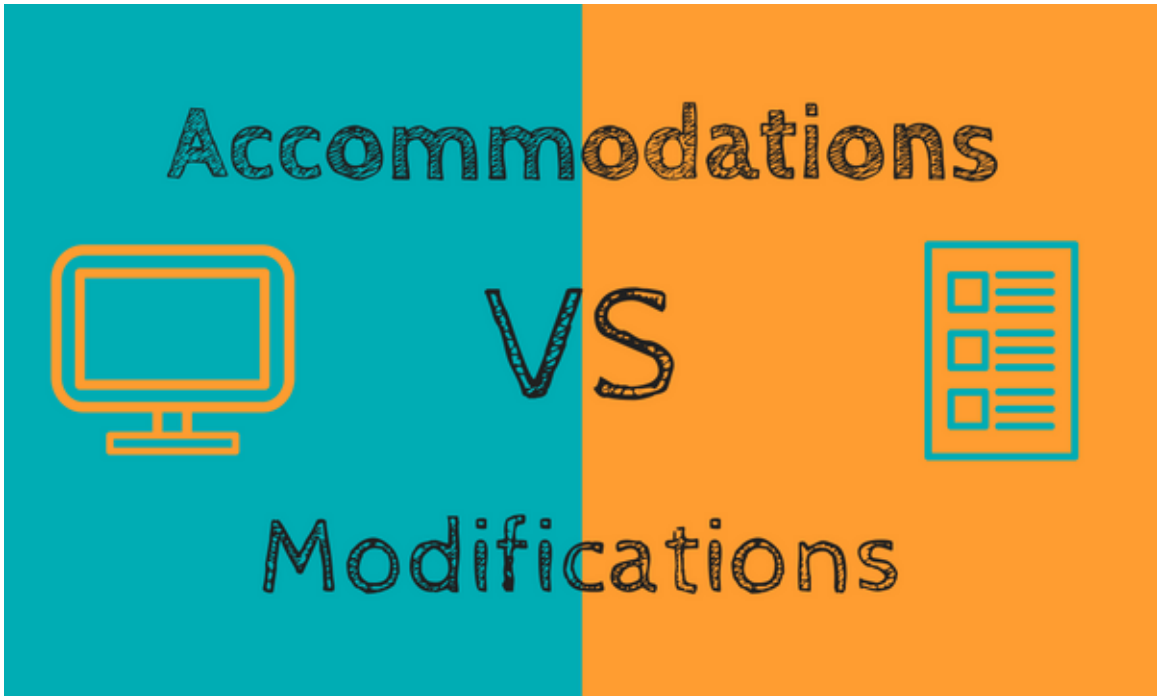
Depending on a student's most recent W-APT score or ACCESS score, they are broken into three different categories: Comprehensive Language Services, Supportive Language Services, or Transitional Language Services.

Services

The LIEP provides what ESL services might look like for students in each criteria category and grade range. While these are not completely accurate for every student, they are general guidelines for what type of service students should receive and how often students receive those services.

Classroom Modifications/Testing Accommodations

ESL students who meet certain criteria, are allowed classroom modifications and testing accommodations. These are assigned by the ESL teacher and should be a collaborative effort with the classroom teacher/s. These can be modified throughout the year if a student's needs changes. These are provided in order to level the academic ability of the ESL students to their English-speaking classmates. Classroom modifications are to be used throughout the year as teachers assign activities and design their lessons. While testing modifications are most relevant during testing times, they should be practiced throughout the year so that students are not at an even bigger disadvantage during testing.



Classroom Modifications

The ESL Department offers several classroom modifications that teachers can use in the classroom to help differentiate lessons and activities for students. The ESL teacher assigns these modifications with the content teacher's approval. Once approved, the modifications should be used throughout the year. Some modifications must be used in conjunction with others as to not interfere with the students completing tasks with regular administration.

English/Native Language Dictionary/Electronic Translator

These translators cannot include definitions. They must be word to word. The use of dictionaries is only useful if students are proficient in their native language and have practice in using dictionaries.

Multiple Testing Sessions

Providing students with a break during tests allows language learners to debrief. This break is not used for extra studying or review.

Extra Time for Projects/Assignments

Teachers can use discretion with this modification. Depending on the size of the project /assignment and the proficiency of the student, determines how much extra time is reasonable.

Read Aloud: by Teacher/Device or by Student

This modification is typically used for newer students who are still struggling with the reading domain. This modification allows tests to be read aloud either to the student by the teacher or by the student. This is a modification that would also require the test setting to be altered as well.

Testing in a Small Group/1:1 & Separate Setting

This modification is used in conjunction with other modifications that might interfere with the regular administration of a test. It also provides the students to not be distracted by the pace of their native speaking classmates. Students grouped together in separate setting should all receive the same modifications.

Simplified Tests

This modification is used at the discretion of the teacher. Differentiation strategies can include but are not limited to, including a word bank, including sentence frames, and/or providing multiple choice instead of open-ended questions.

Reduced Homework

ESL students are still expected to complete homework, however, they typically to not have the assistance or resources that they have at school. Completing language intensive assignments or assignments with difficult directions may not be possible. Consider thoroughly explaining the homework before they go home.

Classroom Buddy

It is encouraged to partner ESL students with another student in the class who can assist them throughout the day. The partner can assist the student with classroom activities as well as navigating the school.

Modified Grading

ESL students are expected to complete work and have it graded. Focus on specific details. For example, what is the emphasis on the assignment- vocabulary, a specific grammar rule, organization, etc. Instead of correcting every aspect, grade only the targeted objective.

Individual/Small Group Instruction

This type of instruction is already part of elementary classroom classes during centers. Middle and High School classes can also utilize centers by breaking up instruction into parts and having smaller work on one section of the lesson at a time.

Manipulatives/Realia

3-D and 2-D props make great examples during instruction in order to provide visuals. Incorporate TPR (Total Physical Response) and have students mimic to help vocabulary retention.

Graphic Organizers

Provide students with visuals to help organize their thoughts and ideas. Graphic organizers can be used in all language domains. For examples see Appendix B.

Teach Specific Note Taking Skills

Provide students with the skills to take effective notes. This is most applicable to older ESL students who take notes in class. Guide students during direct instruction and tell them what is noteworthy.

Highlight Text and Study Guides

Provide ESL students with easily navigated texts and guides. If study guides are too language intensive, they will not aid in the understanding of content. Highlight sections to emphasize their importance and draw the student's attention.

Check Often for Understanding

There are many techniques teachers can use to check for understanding. Observing students while they work and grading completed assignments are the most obvious. Another option is to provide exit tickets that allow the teacher to ask specific questions.

Provide Language Experiences

When teaching content, provide experiences that relate to that content. Examples: 1.) If the class is learning about food, go on a field trip so students can order food or provide a menu where students can order lunch. 2.) If you class is learning about money or budgeting, go to the mall or the supermarket or create a store in class where students can spend fake money. 3.) If your class is learning about getting a job, invite professionals from the community to hold mock interviews.

Testing Accommodations

Testing Accommodations are provided for all qualifying ESL students in grades 3-12. While testing accommodations are to be provided during state mandated tests, they should also be used throughout the year as classroom modifications so that students can have the opportunity to practice working with their accommodations. If a student is assigned a testing accommodation, the corresponding classroom modification should also be assigned.

The most common accommodations are Read Aloud, Extended Time, Separate Setting, and Dictionary. It is important to be aware of what accommodations must be grouped together as well as what can be used within a regular administration setting. The ESL teacher, classroom teacher, and testing coordinator should work together to ensure all accommodations are properly provided.

After state mandated testing is complete, the test administrator will complete a ROA (Review of Accommodations) See Appendix C. This form allows the ESL teacher to make adjustments to the student's educational plan if accommodations were not used or needed.

Newcomer Instruction

Newcomers can enroll in a us school for the first time in any grade. Those students who enroll while in lower grades can be at an advantage as their classmates are also learning new and foundational vocabulary and grammatical patterns. However, students who enroll in upper grades are immersed into complex content. The following list contains examples of objectives that can be included on a pacing guide or checklist for newcomers. It can help with building foundational skills. Included are vocabulary and possible sentence frames to use the vocabulary.

- Classroom Expectations
    - Raising Hands
    - Being Quiet During Instruction
    - Greetings
- Schoolwide Expectations
    - Uniforms/Dress Codes
    - Bus Behavior
    - Bathroom Expectations
    - Hallway-Single File/Quiet
    - Cafeteria Procedures
- Feelings/Emotions
    - Happy/Sad/Angry/etc.
    - “I am _____”

- Holidays/Seasons
    - Spring/Summer/Fall/Winter
    - Independence Day/Christmas/Halloween/etc.
- Colors
    - Primary Colors
    - "The singular noun is (color)"
    - "The plural nouns are (color)"
- Shapes
    - Square/Triangle/Rectangle
    - Trapezoid/Parallelogram/Rhombus
- Foods
    - Fruits/Vegetables
    - Typical American Food
    - "I like (food)"
- Interests
    - Sports
    - Hobbies
    - "I like (interest)"
- Family
    - Mom/Dad/Brother/Sister
    - "I have a (family member)"

- Letters
    - A-Z
- Numbers
    - 1-10
    - 1-100
    - 100-∞
- Sounds/Phonics
    - Short Vowels
    - Long Vowels
    - Dipthongs
- Ordinal Numbers
    - First/Second/Third/etc.
- Sequencing Words
    - First/Next/Then/Finally
    - Eventually/Ultimately/Originally

Differentiation Strategies

Differentiation strategies are powerful tools that teachers can use to alter their lessons and classroom activities. Differentiating allows students who are performing on all academic levels to grasp the materials being taught. If teachers are struggling with differentiation, they should reach out to the content teacher for suggestions.

Yes/No Questions

Instead of asking your students open-ended questions ask yes/no questions. For example: 1.) X What is your favorite color? ✓Is red your favorite color? 2.) X Who is in your family? ✓Do you have a sister? 3.) X What is a proton? ✓Does a proton have a positive charge?

Think/Pair/Share

This activity is useful for students who need time to think about and prepare their answers in English. It also gives the students a chance to practice before they speak in front of a large group. Ask the students to answer a prompt or question. Then, allow them to share their thoughts with a partner. Each group can then share with the entire class.

Self/Peer Editing

It is important that ESL students get the opportunity to correct their own work. The first draft is crucial in simply allowing the students to express their thoughts and ideas. The editing stage gives the teacher the opportunity to see what specific grammar and syntax rules students can apply to their own writing. Peer editing allows language learners to see that even their native speaking peers make mistakes when writing, which boosts their confidence in the classroom.

Flipped Classroom

Provide students with materials and information related to the lesson before class begins. Students can work independently, outside of class, researching and creating their own opinions of the future lesson. ELs can expand their background knowledge and practice the vocabulary and sentence frames that will be used during the classroom discussion. Having more knowledge before-hand, it is more likely that ELs will actively participate in class.

Word Banks/Matching

When assigning tests or assignments provide word banks for ELs. Often times, the wordiness of assigned work can be intimidating to students. However, providing the words gives the students a chance to prove their knowledge without getting overwhelmed with the language. These can be utilized on vocabulary tests, writing prompts, as well as speaking activities.

Sentence Frames

ELs typically need some assistance when getting started on a writing or speaking assignment. Provide sentence frames to encourage students. This gives students the chance to be confident and prepare their writing and speaking.

Word Walls

Word walls are most often used in elementary classroom. However, they can also be used in upper grades as well. Looking at the wall, gives students the opportunity to focus their ideas and focus on grammar and syntax rather than recalling vocabulary. Word walls can include sight words as well as vocabulary words. They can also be added to throughout the year.

Rubrics

Rubrics are especially helpful to ELs if they have any confusion about the expectations of the assignment. A rubric should clearly display what the teacher expects. This removes all ambiguity. The student can use the rubric as a self-check document before they have to submit it. See Appendix D for examples.

Project Based Learning

Instead of assigning typical projects that require excess writing, allow students to create a project that demonstrates what they have learned. Projects help language learners link new language skills to real life experiences. For example: 1.) If students have learned about the short /a/ sound and their assignment is to write words that contain the short /a/ sounds, ELs can create a collage with images that contain the short /a/ sound. 2.) If students have learned about geometry, and their assignment is to write about how different shapes are used to build homes, ELs can create a scale model of a house using geometric shapes. 3.) If students have learned about the life cycle of a plant, and the assignment is to list its steps, give ELs the opportunity to plant a seed and chart its growth.

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Learning a new language is stressful and intimidating for both students and their teachers. Content teachers, who are not experienced or trained with teaching language learners tend to be discouraged and puzzled when creating classroom lessons and activities for this group. This is sensed by the students which creates an environment that is not conducive to learning. Language learners need to feel comfortable and at ease so that they can have the confidence to practice and apply their new language. The responsibility of creating an environment that allows language learners to flourish relies on the teacher.

It has been my experience that most teachers do not have enough confidence when differentiating for language learners. As a result, they continue to struggle with accommodating their ESL students. Content teachers are experts in their field, yet they struggle with adapting their lessons to the needs of language learners. For this reason, I created a manual that could be used as informational as well as a reference guide. The entire school staff can read this manual in order to become familiar with how and why ESL students become labeled as such. Office staff and other support staff would benefit from this manual as well. They too can have a better understanding when enrolling or creating behavioral plans for English learners. This background information can help bridge gaps between schoolwide departments. Likewise, throughout the school year, classroom teachers can refer to this guide for examples and advice when getting a new student, creating new lessons, or preparing for testing.

During this process, I have had the opportunity to become more familiar with the processes and procedures implemented by my local ESL Department. Although our policies

come from federal guidelines, state and district practices can be stricter and require more details. It has been engrossing to learn and understand the reasonings behind the methods used by my local department. Now that I have an appreciation for these fundamentals, I can make better informed opinions on legislation that will directly impact my students. I can use my voice positively affect their education.

I hope that this project eases the fears and trepidations that classroom teachers face when teaching ELs. Teachers become stressed at the thought of having and ESL student. They already feel overcome with the curriculum that they are required to teach. The thought of teaching this material as well as the fundamentals of language is overwhelming. This manual could be used to lessen this burden. Hopefully, with practice, the examples and ideas found within the manual will become second nature to teachers, and they will no longer fear or dread getting a new EL. It is my hope that they will embrace ELs and confidently differentiate their already expertly created lesson plans.

In order for this manual to be a continued success, it will need to be updated in accordance with appropriate regulations on an annual basis. These updates will most likely be minimal. However, depending on the amount of changes, it may be in the best interest of the district to create this manual as an electronic document to reduce the amount of paper used each year. I also believe the ESL departments within schools and districts will be more successful if this manual is used as a blue print for professional developments or webinars geared toward staff. This will ensure that all teachers are aware of the manual and have a basic understanding of ELs, regardless of what students they have on their rosters. Teachers who have this training will be more likely to embrace their new ELs when they are added to their classes.

The initial creation of this manual as well as the yearly update will allow the ESL teacher to remain the school's authority figure on the subject. Most importantly, teachers will have constant access to reference material. Ultimately, when properly utilized, this manual will create a stronger and more unified school community.

Appendices

Appendix A

Rowan-Salisbury SCHOOL SYSTEM

Language Instruction Educational Program (LIEP) Services 2019-2020

LEA/Charte[redacted] Salisbury S[redacted]umber: 800 Sub[redacted] 17, 2019

Contact Name: Beth Poydock Email: beth.poydock@rss.k12.nc.us Phone: 704-630-6138

CONTEXT
The LEA has approximately 19,000 students. Approximately 1450 or 7.5% of the LEA population is English Learners. The teacher-student ratio ranges from 1:45 to 1:60 at the elementary level. At the middle school level, student-teacher ratios range from 1:45 to 1:51. High School has ratios ranging from 1:51 to 1:62. A teacher may serve more than one school. The EL plan is developed at the school level for each EL.

CRITERIA		
Comprehensive Language Services	**Supportive Language Services**	**Transitional Language Services**
Students should meet most of the criteria under each type of language service.		
K: W-APT score of 21 or below. 1-12: Screener/ACCESS scores Overall Composite 1.0-3.0 Reading &/or Writing 1.0-3.0 Listening &/or Speaking 1.0-3.0 <2 years in US Schools Not proficient on EOGs/EOCs Needs language support to participate in content classes Students w/Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE)	K: W-APT score 21-26. 1-12: Screener/ ACCESS scores Overall Composite 3.0-5.0 Reading &/or Writing 3.0-5.0 Listening &/or Speaking 3.0-5.0 >2 years in US schools Not proficient on EOGs/EOCs Struggles to manage academics	K: W-APT score 23-26. 1-12: Screener/ACCESS scores Overall Composite 4.0-5.0+ Reading &/or Writing 4.0-5.0+ Listening &/or Speaking 4.0-6.0 Years in US schools varies May be proficient on EOGs/EOCs Manages class content well
Services for dually identified students (EC/EL OR AIG/EL) will be determined on a case-by-case basis.		

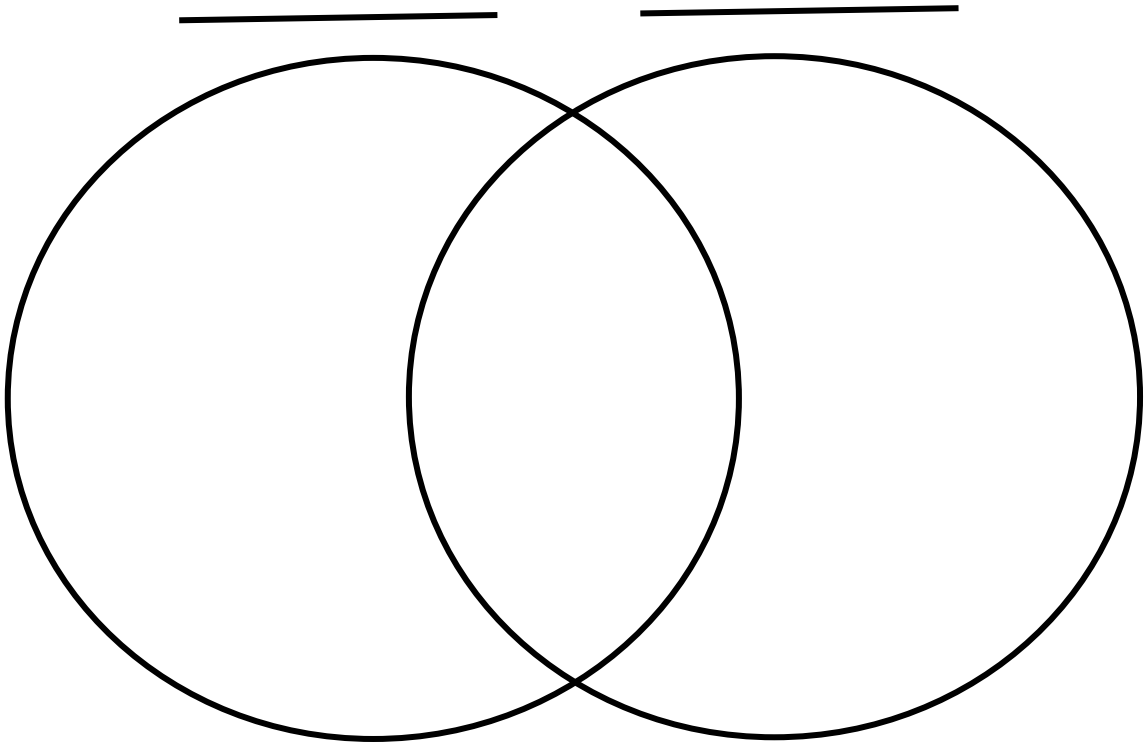
SERVICES: Elementary School -grouped by proficiency level when possible. 3-5 include EOG and class performance.		
Comprehensive Language Services	**Supportive Language Services**	**Transitional Language Services**
Pull-out 5 days a week for minimum of 30-45 mins. Grades 3-5 also receive some co-teaching, content teachers SIOP trained, appropriate instructional modifications in place, and after school tutoring and summer camps provided as needed.	Grades K-2 pull-out 3-5 days a week for minimum of 30-45 mins. Grades 3-5 may receive pull-out or some co-teaching, conte teachers SIOP trained, appropriate instructional modifications in place, and after school tutoring and summer camps provided as needed.	Mostly served by SIOP trained teachers. ESL support as needed for teachers (coaching, EL strategies) and student (1 on 1, small group, content specific) to meet specific language needs as identified through data reflection. Appropriate instructional modifications in place.

SERVICES: Middle School		
Comprehensive Language Services	**Supportive Language Services**	**Transitional Language Services**
Content based ESL class for a minimum of 45 minutes per day. Content teacher SIOP trained and students strategically scheduled. Appropriate instructional modifications in place, and after school tutoring provided as needed.	Some content based ESL classes for 45 minutes per day using the LEA, but mostly co-teaching. Content teachers are SIOP trained and students are strategically scheduled. Appropriate instructional modifications in place. and after school tutoring provided as needed.	Mostly served by SIOP trained teachers. ESL support as needed for teachers (coaching, EL strategies) and student (1 on 1, small group, content specific) to meet specific language needs as identified through data reflection. Appropriate instructional modifications in place.

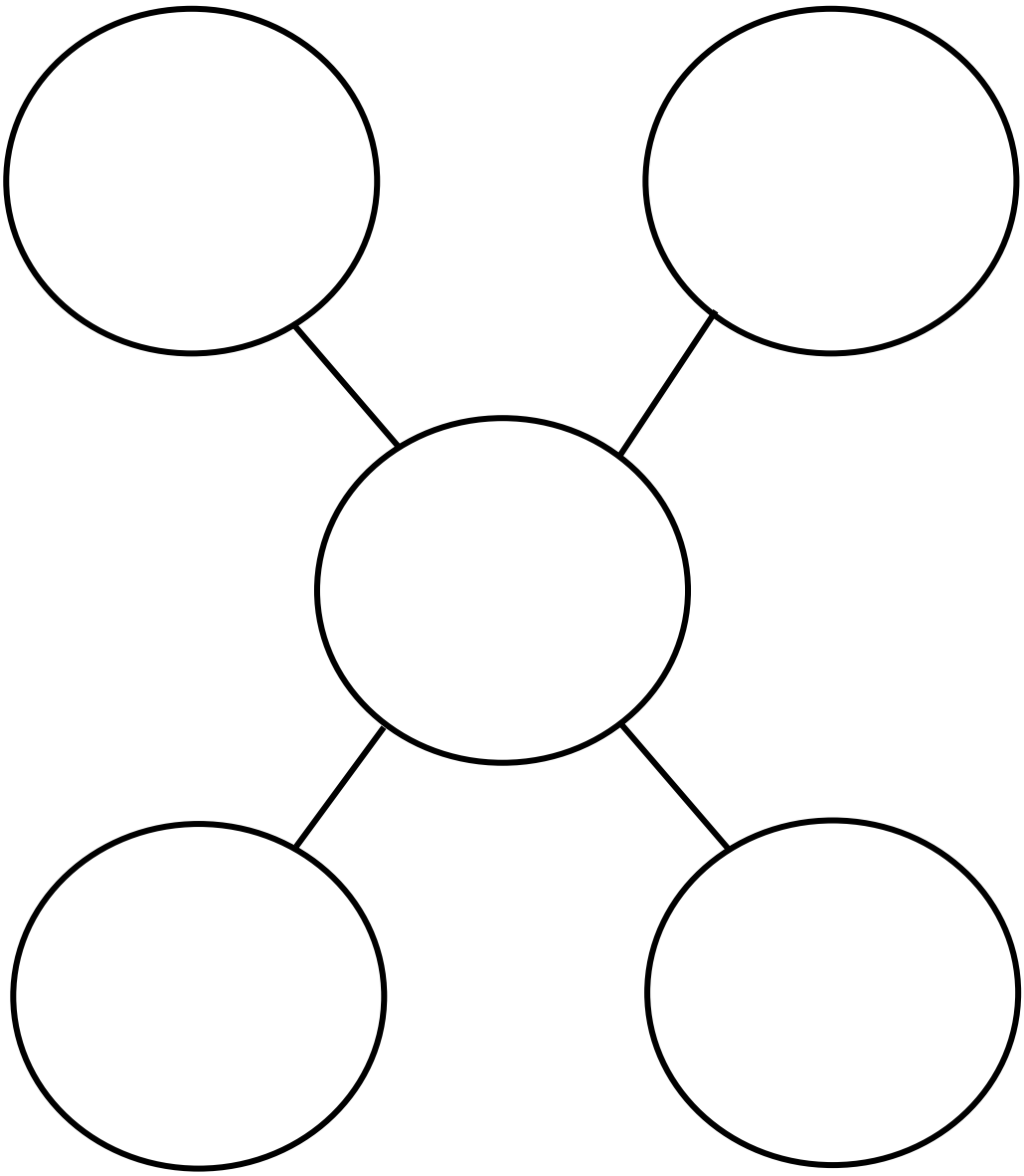
SERVICES: High School		
Comprehensive Language Services	**Supportive Language Services**	**Transitional Language Services**
Content based ESL class for up to 90 min per day. Content teachers SIOP trained and student clustered. Appropriate instructional modifications in place and after school tutoring provided as needed.	Some content based ESL classes for up to 90 minutes per day using the LEA, some co-teaching. Content teachers are SIOP trained and students are clustered. Appropriate instructional modifications in place, and after school tutoring provided as needed.	Mostly served by SIOP trained teachers. ESL support as needed for teachers (coaching, EL strategies) and student (1 on 1, small group, content specific) to meet specific language needs as identified through data reflection. Appropriate instructional modifications in place.

Appendix B

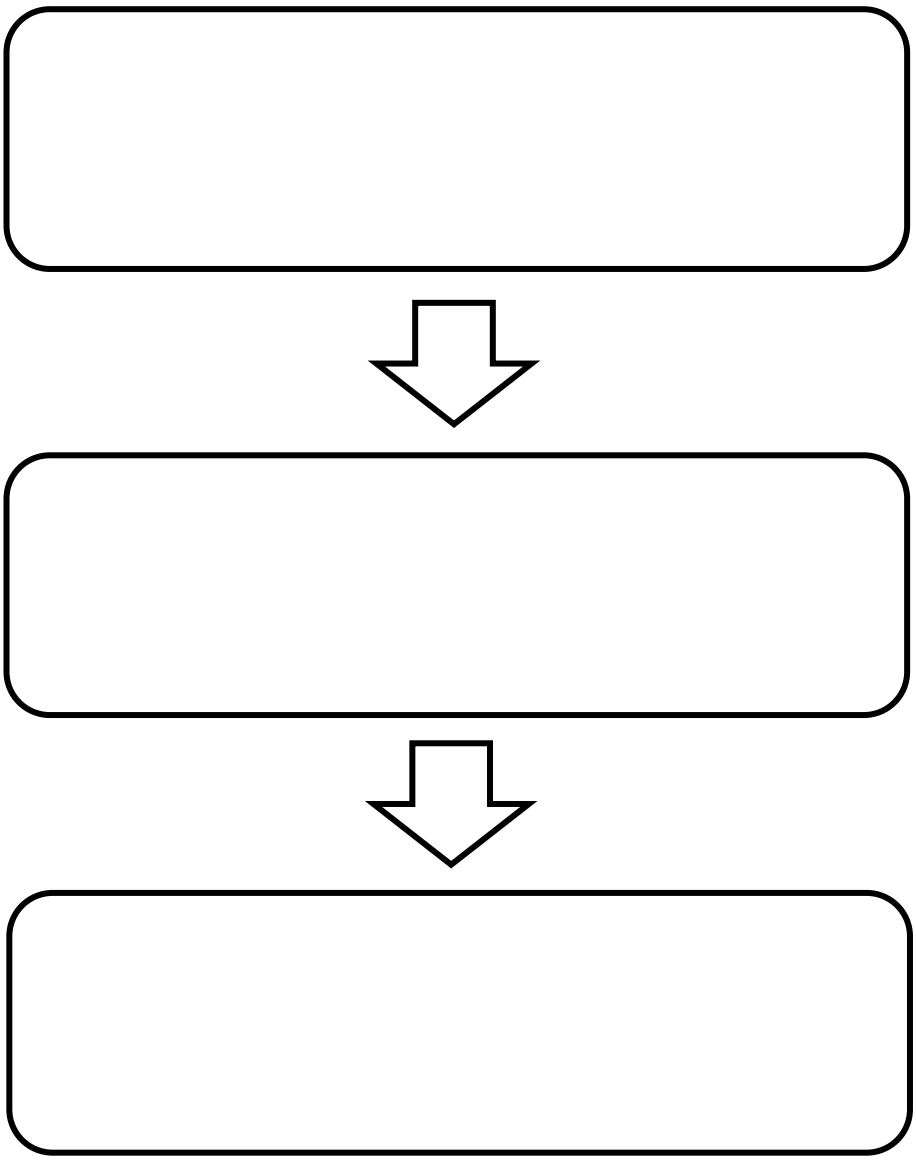
Venn Diagram



Bubble Map



Flow Chart



Appendix C

Review of Accommodations Used During Testing

Student Name	[redacted]
PowerSchool ID	
Case Manager	
Choose one of the following plans (according to order of accommodations documentation):	☐ IEP ☐ Section 504 Plan ☑ EL Plan ☐ **Transitory Impairment Documentation**
Dates of Plan	Start Date: 8/7/2019
	End Date: 5/21/2020
Test	☐ BOG3 ☐ EOG ☐ RTA3 ☐ EOC ☐ NCFE ☐ CCRAA ☐ CTE ☐ ACCESS for ELLs
Subject/Subtest	Math EOG

Complete one form per test. Before testing, complete the top of the form and Column 1. During/after testing, complete Column 2. Completed forms should be kept in the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) folder and/or Section 504/English Learner (EL)/transitory impairment documentation to be accessible for future reference.
NOTE: While the list below includes all state-approved accommodations, some do not apply to students identified solely as ELs.
Testing accommodations should be consistent with the accommodations used routinely during classroom instruction and on similar classroom assessments.

☐ Regular Administration ☐ Other Administration

School	[redacted]
Grade	3
Test Date	
Test Administrator	

Column 1: To Be Completed Prior To Testing		Column 2: To Be Completed During/After Testing	
Check the required accommodations documented on the student's IEP/Section 504 Plan/EL Plans/Transitory Impairment Documentation		Was this accommodation ***provided*** to the student during testing?	Describe the specific details of ***how*** this accommodation was provided to the student. Did the student ***use*** the accommodation? If yes, ***how*** did he/she use it?
☑	*Example: Test Read Aloud (in English) Specify: Computer*	*Example: Yes*	*Example: Test read aloud in English by Computer.*
☐	EC/IEP		
☐	504		
☐	Test Admin Reads Test Aloud - Read by Student Request		
☐	Test Admin Reads Test Aloud - Read Everything		
☐	Test Read Aloud (in English)		
☐	Student Reads Test Aloud		
☐	Computer Reads Test Aloud ? Student Controlled		
☑	Testing in a Separate Room: Small Group		
☐	Word-to-Word Bilingual (English/Native Language) Dictionary/Electronic Translator		
☑	Extended Time: 60 min		
☐	Multiple Sessions		
Printed name of person completing this portion of form: _____ Signature of person completing this portion of form: _____		Printed name of person completing this portion of form: _____ Signature of person completing this portion of form: _____	

Comments/Considerations for next IEP/504/EL/Transitory Impairment team meeting:

Appendix D

Elementary Speaking/Presentation Rubric

Was my speech organized? (Beginning, Middle, & End)			
Was my project neat?			
Did I make eye contact?			
Was my voice confident and clear?			

Middle School Book Review

	2	1	0
Introduction	Excellent "Attention Getter"	Uninteresting "Attention Getter"	No "Attention Getter"
Summary	Clear Overview of all Major Events	Overview of Some Major Events	Too Few Major Events
Organization	Introduction, Summary, Analysis, & Conclusion	Incorrect Order	Missing Sections or Not Organized
Analysis	Contains all 3: Themes, Conflict, & Tone	Contains 2: Themes, Conflict, & Tone	Contains 1 or 0: Themes, Conflict, & Tone
Length	3 Full Pages	2 Full Pages	Less than 2 Pages
Grammar	0-3 Grammatical Errors	4-6 Grammatical Errors	7 or More Grammatical Errors
Total Score: _____/12			

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